

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## **Saudi Arabia**

### **Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Narrative**

### **FAIRS Country Report**

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**Report Highlights:**

This FAIRS Country Report details regulatory requirements and import procedures for food and agricultural imports imposed by the government of Saudi Arabia. The Food Laws Section of this report is updated, providing information on the newly revised animal feed subsidy and the Saudi government's decision to eliminate or reduce duties on imported foodstuffs

**Disclaimer**

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped. FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

## **I. FOOD LAWS**

### **A. Overview**

Saudi Arabia is the largest and a growing market for high value foodstuffs in the Gulf region. All food products are imported by the private sector. The vast majority of food products are subject to a 5 percent import duty while coffee, tea and fresh red meat enter the country duty free. Selected processed food products, however, are assessed higher import duties. In order to protect local food processors and production from competitively priced imports, the Kingdom ties import duties to the level of local production of similar products. As a general rule, a maximum import tariff rate of 40 percent is applied when local production of a food or agricultural product exceeds a self-sufficiency level. Currently, a 40 percent import duty rate applies to fresh, dried and processed dates. Imported ice cream is assessed a 20 percent import duty.

Recently, the Saudi government introduced an agricultural policy aimed at the phased elimination of water intensive agricultural crops such as wheat and alfalfa. In 2009, the Saudi government implemented its 2008 decree which called for a 12.5 percent annual reduction in local wheat production over an eight year period. The government's goal is to terminate local wheat production by the spring of 2016. Until then, Saudi Arabia will augment the percentage reduction in local wheat production by importing a similar percentage from the international wheat market. The government will maintain the guaranteed purchase price for locally grown wheat at \$267 per metric ton until 2016. In 2003, Saudi Arabia eliminated barley production to save water. Grain and forage production place large demands on non-renewable aquifer water, resulting in an imbalance between water recharge and water discharge. The new agricultural policy calls for selective agricultural development to achieve a balance between water and food security.

The Saudi government has continued to support selective agricultural production to encourage and support farmers by providing soft and interest-free loans, distributing free farm land, subsidizing some production equipment and animal feed. In January 2009, the government issued a revised animal feed subsidy list that consists of 17 energy and protein rich animal feed ingredients. Under the revised program, the government will provide rebates that range from \$26 (rice hulls) to \$101 (soybean meal) per metric ton, depending on the type of imported feed. The rebate will be paid directly to the local importer. The revised list added two new feed items-Rhodes grass and Sudan grass-to the subsidy list. The subsidy depends on the type of imported feed and is paid directly to the local importer.

For religious reasons, Saudi Arabia bans imports of alcoholic beverages, live swine, pork and food ingredients or additives that contain pork products, including pork fat and gelatin. Livestock meat and poultry shipments must be accompanied by a "Halal" slaughter certificate issued by an Islamic center in the country of origin. Additional statements on the health certificate accompanying poultry and livestock meat shipments must indicate that the animals slaughtered for export to the Kingdom were not fed with feed containing protein, fat or remnants of animal origin and were not treated with any growth hormones. The most important regulatory, non-tariff barriers that U.S. food product exporters encounter in Saudi Arabia include: biotech labeling, production & expiration date regulations, Arabic labeling requirements,

a declaration that animals slaughtered and exported to Saudi Arabia were not fed with feed containing protein, fat or remnants of animal origin, and a Halal Slaughtering certificate for both livestock and poultry meat.

Saudi Arabia is the most influential member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which includes five other countries in the Arabian Peninsula: United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar. As a group, the GCC is striving to create a common set of food standards. The Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO) is a dominant standard setting agency in the GCC countries. Currently, SASO is the only Saudi organization responsible for setting national standards for commodities and products, measurements, testing methods, meteorological symbols and terminology, commodity definitions, safety measures, and environmental testing. Since its establishment in 1972, SASO has issued more than 1000 production and testing standards for food products and is presently working on new standards. Saudi standards are typically based on CODEX Alimentarius regulations and to some extent on European and U.S. standards, but are modified to reflect local conditions.

## **B. Saudi Food and Drug Authority**

In May 2009, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA), established in March 2003, took over the responsible for inspecting imported high value food products at the Kingdom's 27 ports of entry. The Authority will take charge of setting food standards and ensuring the safety of food products in the next few months. Currently, standards are set by the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO). Before May 2009 imported foodstuffs were tested by the Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) at ports of entry. The SFDA will take over inspection of imported animal feed, fruits, vegetables and drugs in the next few months.

The authority has hired a German company to help implement its three-year \$200 million dollar capacity building program, which involves upgrading food inspection laboratories, training staff, and developing advanced food inspection techniques.

The SFDA, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, has a Board of Directors consisting of eight ministers: Municipality & Rural Affairs, Defense, Interior, Health, Commerce and Industry, Agriculture, Water & Electricity, Finance, Economic & Planning plus the SFDA Executive Director General, and representation from other organizations such as the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO), the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and Saudi food and drugs experts.

### **Regulatory Role of the SFDA**

The SFDA will regulate, oversee, and control food, drugs, and medical devices, as well as setting mandatory standards for both imported and locally manufactured products. Testing activities for these products will be conducted in SFDA or other government-operated laboratories. In addition, the SFDA will be responsible for educating consumers on all matters related to food, drugs and medical devices.

Principal work objectives of the SFDA are summarized below:

- Monitor the safety, security, and effectiveness of food and drugs for human and animal consumption.

- Monitor the safety of complementary biological and chemical substances, cosmetics and pesticides.
- Monitor the safety of medical diagnostic devices and their impact on public health.
- Establish and implement clear policies and procedures for food and drugs.
- Conduct research and applied studies to identify health problems, their causes, and set methods for research evaluation. The Authority will establish scientific guidelines for specialized consulting services and executive programs in the fields of food and drugs. This may be accomplished through the recruitment of experts or through a partnership with research bodies such as King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) and/or university research centers.
- Control and supervise the licensing of factories producing food, drugs and medical devices.
- Disseminate and exchange information with local and international scientific and legal agencies.

The SFDA initiates its regulatory tasks in two phases. The first phase began on March 2003 and will be completed in the next few months. During the first phase, the SFDA will devote its efforts to establishing its organizational structure and resources to prepare itself for the second phase when it will take charge of regulating food, drugs, and medical devices, as well as setting mandatory standards for both imported and locally manufactured products. SFDA will execute the following tasks during the first phase:

- Work with concerned ministries and agencies to revise, develop and update regulatory laws to meet human/animal health safety and product quality requirements.
- Ratify food and drug policies in the Kingdom and set mechanisms to ensure the quality and safety of food and drugs.
- Establish specified systems to help concerned agencies accomplish administrative and field follow-up to ensure easy and safe application of laws and regulatory orders.
- Adopt methods and techniques that will enable food and drug regulatory agencies to verify the accuracy and validity of information contained on the labels of circulated foodstuffs and drugs.
- In coordination with the Ministry of Health and the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO), establish specifications and standards for production, distribution, importation and registration of drugs and medical devices.
- Together with SASO, set and certify texts of National Standard Specifications related to scaling, calibration, code identification of products and goods, including food & drug sampling methods.
- Prepare specifications, procedures and methods of detecting food and drug products.

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, establish hygiene specifications and requirements that food industry facilities and workers should follow.
- Develop general policies that ensure the availability of appropriate drugs in the Kingdom.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs, establish hygiene requirements for all outlets linked with public health.
- In cooperation with the Ministries of Health, Finance (Customs Department) and Commerce and Industry, establish standards and methods that will regulate customs clearance procedures for imported drugs.
- Propose and issue rules for the application of penalties that will be imposed on violators of Saudi Arabia's food and drug laws.
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs to develop rules, procedures and requirements for the control and inspection of Saudi Arabia's animal slaughtering facilities and related sales outlets.

In the second phase, which started in May 2009, the Authority assumed responsibility for the following procedural, regulatory and calibration tasks:

- Inspect all agricultural, animal product and veterinary medicine imports customs clearance.
- Control imported food and drugs.
- Control animal and other agricultural products under agriculture and animal quarantine statutes.
- Control locally processed food items before and during the production process, under the terms of quality and compliance certificates.
- Test children's food, therapeutic potable water, tobacco and plant derivatives.
- Control and inspect markets, foodstuff commercial centers, restaurants, and food plants to ensure adherence to Saudi health and safety specifications, and laws related to commercial fraud in the areas of food and drugs.
- Ensure the safety of potable water supplies.
- Supervise the implementation of statutes and laws related to food and drugs.
- Monitor hygiene conditions for facilities producing food and drug products.
- Supervise the safety of food workers through periodic site examinations.

- Regulate, monitor and inspect animal slaughtering facilities and meat sales outlets.

## **II. LABELING REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. General Requirements**

All imported and locally produced prepackaged foodstuffs must meet labeling requirements as indicated in Gulf Standard 9/2007. According to this GCC-wide standard, prepackaged food product labels should be in Arabic or include an Arabic language translation of the label. Labels must contain at a minimum: the product name, packer's name, country of origin or manufacture, listing of ingredients, instructions where applicable, for the end use of the product, and the shelf-life of the product.

Section five of GSO 9/2007, specifies the following mandatory labeling requirements for prepackaged food products:

#### **5/1 Name of the food product.**

- 5/1/1 The name shall identify the true nature of the food and shall normally be specific and not generic.
- 5/1/2 Where a name or names have been established for a foodstuff in an individual Gulf Standard, at least one of these names shall be used, otherwise, the usual or common name used in the country where the food is distributed shall be adopted.
- 5/1/3 In the absence of any such names, either usually or commonly existing, an appropriate descriptive name which is not misleading or confusing to the consumer shall be used.
- 5/1/4 There shall be placed, either in conjunction with or in close proximity to the name of the food, such additional words or phrases as necessary to avoid misleading or confusing the consumer as regards the true natural or physical condition of the contents of a prepackaged foodstuff including the type of packing medium, style, the conditions or type of treatment has it undergone; for instance: dried, condensed, reconstituted, or smoked.

#### **5/2 List of Ingredients:**

- 5/2/1 With the exception of single ingredient foods, a list of all ingredients shall be shown on the label in a descending order of ingoing weight proportions (m/m), at the time of the manufacture of such a foodstuff.
- 5/2/2 The list of ingredients shall be either preceded or headed by an appropriate title including the term 'INGREDIENTS'.
- 5/2/3 A list of food additives to the product or their numerical codes (international

classification system (ICS) or European index) need to be declared.

- 5/2/4 The foodstuffs and ingredients which are known to cause hypersensitivity shall always be declared; these are :
  - 5/2/4/1 Cereals containing gluten substance ;i.e., wheat, barley ,oats, rye, spelt as such or their hybridized strains and products of these;
  - 5/2/4/2 Crustacea and products of these ;
  - 5/2/4/3 Eggs and egg products ;
  - 5/2/4/4 Fish and fish products ;
  - 5/2/4/5 Peanuts, soybeans and products of these ;
  - 5/2/4/6 Walnuts and nut products ;
  - 5/2/4/7 Milk and milk products (lactose included) ;
  - 5/2/4/8 sulphite in concentration of 10 mg/kg or more.
- 5/2/5 Added water shall be declared in the list of ingredients except when the water forms a part of an ingredient such as brine, syrup or broth used in compound foods and mentioned as such in the list of ingredients. However, water or other volatile particles evaporated in the course of manufacture need not to be declared.
- 5/2/6 In the case of dehydrated or condensed foods which are intended to be reconstituted by adding water only, the ingredients may be listed after the addition of water in the order of weight proportion (m/m) in the reconstituted product, provided the inclusion of an explanatory statement such as "ingredients of the product when prepared in accordance with the instructions on the label".
- 5/2/7 The presence in any foodstuff or any of its ingredients being obtained via biotechnology of an allergen probably transferable from it to any of the products listed in Clause 5/2/4 shall be declared.
- 5/2/8 A specific name shall be used for ingredients in compliance with the provisions laid down in Clause 5/1), except :-
  - 5/2/8/1 For generic nomenclature: unless a universal class title would be more informative, the following names may be used:-



<b>Title of classes</b>	<b>Specific class names</b>
-Refined oils , other than olive oil.	- The term 'Oils' accompanied by either the quality 'vegetable' or 'animal' and a statement as to indicate whether it is 'hydrogenated' or 'partially hydrogenated' as appropriate .
-Refined fats.	- The term 'fat' together with either the quality 'vegetable' or 'animal, as appropriate.
-Starches , other than chemically modified Starch.	- 'Starch'.
- All types of fish where the fish constitutes an ingredient of another food , provided that the labelling and presentation of such a food does not refer to a specific species of fish.	- 'Fish'.
-All types of poultry meat where such meat constitutes an ingredient of another food , provided that the labelling and presentation of such a food does not refer to a specific kind of poultry meat.	- ' Poultry meat.'
-All types of cheese where the cheese or a mixture of cheeses constitutes an ingredient of another food , provided that the labelling and presentation of such a food does not refer to a specific type of cheese.	- ' Cheese '
All spices and spice extracts, not exceeding 2% of the weight, whether added individually or in combination in the foods.	- 'Spices','spice' or 'mixed spices' as appropriate
- All herbs or parts of herbs as appropriate, not exceeding 2% of the weight, whether added	- 'Essential herbs 'or ' mixed essential herbs', as appropriate .

<b>Title of classes</b>	<b>Specific class names</b>
singly or as a mixture in the foods.	
-All types of gum preparations used in producing the gum base for the manufacture of chewing gum .	- 'Gum base'.
- All types of sucrose .	- 'Sugar'.
-Anhydrous dextrose and dextrose monohydrate.	- 'Dextrose'or 'glucose'.
- All types of caseinates	- 'Caseinates'
- Raw , pressed or refined cocoa butter	- 'cocoa butter'
-All crystallized fruits not exceeding10%of the weight of food.	- ' Crystallized fruit '

5/2/8/2 For the food additives permitted for use in Gulf Standards the following names shall be used beside the specific name or international number:-

Acidity Regulators

- Acids
- Anti-caking Agents
- Anti-foaming Agents
- Anti-oxidants
- Bulking Agents
- Colours
- Gelling Agents
- Glazing Agents
- Humectants
- Preservatives
- Colour Retention Agents
- Emulsifiers
- Emulsifying Salts
- Firming Agents
- Flour treatment Agents
- Flavour Enhancers
- Foaming Agents
- Raising Agents
- Stabilizers
- Sweeteners
- Thickeners.

5/2/8/3 The following names may be used for food additives permitted in foods, in general :-

- Flavour(s) and flavouring(s): can be described as 'natural', 'natural identical' or 'artificial ' as appropriate;
- Modified starch(es).

5/2/9 Shall be included in the list of ingredients, however, any food additive carried over from a food into another in a significant quantity or in an amount sufficient to perform a particular technological function in that food as a result of the use of raw materials or other ingredients in which the additive was used. Exempted from that, are the additives and processing aids .

5/2/10 Exempted from appearing in the list of ingredients is any food additive carried over into a food in a proportion less than that required for achieving a certain technological function in that food, . This exemption does not apply to the other food additives or processing aids.

5/2/11 Nutritional Information:

The following nutritional information may be preferably set out, however, in the case of foods catered for special dietary use the declaration of this information on the label is mandatory :

5/2/11/1 The nutritive value of the prepackaged foodstuffs to include such essential elements as: (Carbohydrates- Fats- Protein- Dietary fibers - Energy).

5/2/11/2 In the case of adding vitamins , mineral salts or any other dietary elements in the food ingredients, then , the value of each dietary element shall be separately declared in the nutritional information accompanying the prepackaged foodstuff.

5/2/11/3 All nutritional information and /or net content shall be set forth as percentage by weight if, it is less than 100 g or 100ml.

5/2/11/4 The information shall be set out in international units (g. mg. µg- IU ) and (kilocalories) for Energy items).

### **5/3 NET CONTENTS:**

5/3/1 The net contents , since packed, shall be declared in metric system .

5/3/2 The net contents shall be declared by volume as for liquid foods, by weight for solid foods and either by weight or volume for semi-solid or viscous foods.

5/3/3 The drained weight (weight of food after the liquid has been drained) of a packed shall be declared. A liquid medium means water, or any aqueous solutions of sugar or salt , fruit or vegetable juices in canned such products only, or vinegar, either in a single or combined form.

### **5/4 NAME AND ADDRESS:**

The name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor shall be declared.

**5/5 COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:**

5/5/1 The country of origin of the food shall be declared on the food containers if its omission would mislead or deceive the consumer about the item , especially in the case of repacking.

5/5/2 When a foodstuff undergoes processing in a second country which may probably change its fundamental nature, the country where the processing has taken place shall be considered as the country of origin for labelling purposes.

**5/6 LOT IDENTIFICATION:**

Each container shall be embossed or permanently marked either in such a coded or express terminology as to identify the processing lot numerical.

**5/7 DATE MARKING AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR STORAGE AND USE:**

5/7/ Without prejudice to what has been mentioned in Gulf standard stated in item (2.1) the production date : and expiration date shall be declared as follows:-

5/7/1/1 For food products with a minimum durability less than three months (i.e Day - Month -Year) .

5/7/1/2 For food products with a minimum durability of more than three months (i.e Month –Year).

If the month is December, the years is declared, and the minimum durability shall be counted up to the end of the month in which the expiration is dated.

5/7/2 The expiration date shall be preceded by such phrases as:-

5/72/1 'Best before...'accompanied by the date;

5/72/2 'Best before end...' in other cases.

These phrases shall be accompanied by either the date itself , or a reference to where the date is given .

5/7/3 The day, month and year shall be indicated in a clear (uncoded) manner in the same order .

5/7/4 The expiration date shall not be declared in case of the following products:-

5/7/4/1 Fresh fruits and vegetables, including potatoes which have not been peeled, cut or similarly treated;

5/7/4/2 bakers' ware or pastry which are normally consumed within 24 hours from their manufacture ;

5/7/4/3 vinegar ;

5/7/4/4 edible salt;

5/7/4/5 sugar;

5/7/4/6 confectionery products consisting of flavoured and /or coloured sugary items;

5/7/4/7 chewing gum.

5/7/5 In addition to the expiration date, any specific requirements pertaining to the storage conditions of the food shall be laid down on the label, should the minimum durability be dependent thereupon.

5/7/6 Instructions for use including reconstitution directives , where applicable, shall be indicated on the label, if necessary for ensuring a correct and sound utilization of the foodstuff .

#### **5/8 IRRADIATED FOODS:**

5/8/1 The labelling of a food which has been treated with ionizing radiation shall include a written statement indicating such a treatment in close proximity to the food name. The use of International Food Irradiation Symbol is optional ; however, whenever declared on the label it shall be placed in conjunction with the name of food.



5/8/2 In the case where an irradiated product is used as an ingredient in an other food , so, this shall be set out in the list of ingredients.

5/8/3 When a single ingredient product is prepared from a raw material which has already undergone a treatment by radiation , this shall be stated in the list of ingredients.

### **SFDA Requires Foodstuff Manufacturers to Affix Arabic Language Stickers on Labels of Exported Prepackaged Food Products**

On June 9, 2010, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) informed Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce & Industry that it will fully implement on December 9, 2010 section 7/2 of Gulf Standards Organization (GSO) No.9/2007 titled “Labeling of Prepackaged Food Stuffs”. The most important requirement in the SFDA circular number E/991 is the decision to accept only Arabic language stickers affixed by manufacturers on labels of exported prepackaged food products (section 7/2/2/1 of GSO 9/2007). In the past, Saudi Arabia has allowed food products exporting houses or consolidators to place Arabic language stickers on labels of prepackaged food products at their warehouses.

#### **Grace Period to Implement the New Requirement**

SFDA granted a six month grace period that ends on December 9, 2010 for domestic foodstuff importers to fully implement the new requirement. SFDA has informed its food inspection laboratories at Saudi ports of entry to reject any prepackaged food products shipment that does not comply with the new Arabic language stickers requirement.

## Section 7/2 states the following:

### 7/2: Language:

- 7/2/1: Labeling and adjoining explanatory statements shall be in Arabic and, where another language is used, it shall be alongside the Arabic. All the information provided in another language shall be identical with those written in Arabic.
- 7/2/2: If the Arabic information is stated in a supplementary sticker adjacent to the original label, the following shall be met:
  - **7/2/2/1: It shall be a single sticker provided by the manufacture only to fulfill all the relevant stipulations provided in this standard.**
  - 7/2/2/2: It shall not obscure any information required by this standard.
  - 7/2/2/3: It shall not contain any statement discrepant with the original labeling.
  - 7/2/2/4: It shall be irremovable in the ordinary handling and circulation conditions of the prepackaged foodstuff.

## B. Shelf Life

In December 2005, Saudi Arabia implemented a voluntary shelf life standard (manufacturer-determined use-by dates) for most foodstuffs with the exception of selected perishable foods (fresh or chilled meat and poultry; fresh milk and fresh milk based products; margarine; fresh fruit juice; table eggs, and baby foods) that must meet SASO's established mandatory expiration periods. The revised standard (SASO 457/2005) will no longer ban imports of food product with less than half of its shelf life remaining.

Shelf life can only be shown by clear and unambiguous production and expiration dates. The use of any of the following statements for expressing expiration date is permissible.

- Expiration Date
- Use by (date)
- Fit for (from the day of production)
- Use Before (date)
- Sell by date (for food products having an expiration period exceeding 3 months).

The production and expiration dates should be declared on the label of the package in uncoded manner as follows:

- Day-Month-Year: for foodstuffs with an expiration period less than three months.
- Month-Year: for foodstuffs with expiration exceeding three months.

Dates shall be engraved or in relief, printed to stamped with permanent ink directly on all packages or on their original label by the producer only. Adding stickers for production and expiration dates is not permissible. There shall be not more than one date of production or of expiration on the same package. Both dates shall not be subject to deletion, change or deceit.

Products with No Specific Expiration Date: Products with no specified shelf life such as salt, spices, milled rice, etc. only the date of production or processing would be shown as: mm/yy.

We recommend that when putting together an order for a Saudi importer, a U.S. exporter should cross check information contained on his/her food label, including Production/Expiration dates, with the Saudi buyer.

### **C. Additional Labeling Requirements**

In addition to requirements per GCC 9/1995, the following labeling information must be declared for food additives and antioxidants used in foodstuffs:

- For coloring matters, their mixtures, preparations and diluents used in foodstuffs, the following additional information must be declared:
  1. Common name
  2. Color index number
  3. Name of solvent or diluent
  4. Production and expiration dates in a non-coded manner (day-month-year)
  5. Dye purity
  6. The statement “Free from alcohol”
  7. The statement “Color matter for use in foodstuffs.”
- For Flavors permitted for use in Foodstuffs common name and code number (if found) must be declared on food products containers contained flavors.
- For preservatives permitted for use in food products, common name or EEC number and a statement “Preservative for Use in Food Products” in case of preservatives containers.
- For emulsifiers, stabilizers and thickeners permitted for use in foodstuffs, the following additional information must be declared:
  1. Common name or EEC no.
  2. In case of gelatin, lecithin and mono and diglycerides the source shall be mentioned.
- For Sweeteners Permitted for Use in Food Products:
  1. The name of sweeteners or INS numbers



2. Food products formulated specifically for use by diabetics or for other special nutritional uses shall contain the statement “Food for special dietary use or food for diabetic.”

3. The amount of sweeteners matter, mg/liter or kg in case of using combination of sweeteners, the amount of each in combination shall be declared.

The following warning must be declared:

4. In case of aspartame, “Not to be used by persons who have phenyl ketonuria.”

5. In case of saccharine, “Use of this product may be hazardous to your health because it contains saccharin which has been determined to cause cancer in laboratory animals.”

6. In the case of sugar alcohol "Excess of consumed quantity may cause diarrhea.”

- The following additional labeling information must be declared for antioxidants permitted for use in foodstuffs:

1. Common name or EEC number

2. A statement “Antioxidants permitted for use in foodstuffs” in case of antioxidant containers.

#### **D. Requirements Specific to Nutritional Labeling**

In addition to the general labeling requirements as stated in GS 9/1995, further information must be declared for prepackaged foods for special dietary use per Gulf Standard No. 654/1996 (General Requirements for Prepackaged Foods for Special Dietary Use). Following is the main labeling information to be stated per GSO No. 654/1996.

**Definition of Dietary Foods:** GSO number 654/1996 defines dietary foods as food products specially prepared or formulated to satisfy particular dietary requirements which exist because of a particular physical or physiological conditions and/or specific diseases and disorders. These foodstuffs differ significantly in composition from the ordinary products of comparable nature, if such ordinary foods exist.

#### **Requirements:**

The following shall be met in prepackaged foods for special dietary uses:

- 4.1 The product shall be completely free from pork products or their derivatives.
- 4.2 It shall be registered by the Saudi Ministry of Health.
- 4.3 It shall not be pharmaceutically packaged in a way suggesting that it is a drug.



- 4.4 It shall be offered for sale in places separated from the ordinary foods in supermarkets. Foods for special dietary uses for infants and children shall be dispensed only by pharmacies, hospitals and children care centers.
- 4.5 Artificial sweeteners are not permitted to be used in all baby and infant foods.

### **Labeling:**

Without prejudice to what is stated in the Gulf standards mentioned in 2.1 and 2.2, the following shall be declared on the label:

- 5.1 Name of the product followed by the characterizing essential features indicating that it is a food for special dietary use.
- 5.2 The amount of energy expressed in kilojoules and kilocalories per 100 grams or 100 ml of the food product and where appropriate per the specified quantity of food as suggested for consumption.
- 5.3 Its content of protein, carbohydrates, fat, dietary, fiber and each vitamin and mineral per 100 grams or 100 ml of the food (as sold) and where appropriate per specified quantity of the food as suggested for consumption.
- 5.4 The total quantity of the specific nutrients which provide the characterizing essential features per 100 grams or 100 ml of the food product and, where appropriate, per specified quantity of food as suggested for consumption.
- 5.5 The special cases in which the food is used and the suitable amount permissible for daily consumption.
- 5.6 Storage conditions before and after opening of the package.
- 5.7 The procedures of preparation and use, and in the case of baby and infant foods the procedures shall be indicated according to the age of child.
- 5.8 The following cautionary statement shall be declared: "To Be Used Under Medical Supervision", wherever applicable to certain foods.
- 5.9 The amount of added sweeteners accompanied by the following cautionary statements:
  - 5.9.1 In the case of aspartame: [5.9.1.1] "Not to be used by persons who have phenylketonuria", [5.9.1.2] "The maximum intake shall not exceed 40 mg/kg of body weight".
  - 5.9.2 In the case of saccharin: "Use of this product may be hazardous to your health, because it contains saccharin which has been determined to cause cancer to laboratory animals".

- 5.9.3 In the case of manitol: "Excess of consumed quantity of manitol over 20 g per day may cause diarrhea".
- 5.9.4 In the case of sorbitol or xylitol: "Excess of consumed quantity of sorbitol or xylitol over 40 g per day may cause diarrhea".
- 5.10 Not to be described or marked in such a manner that misleads the consumer.

## **E. Biotech Labeling**

In December 2001, MOCI implemented its biotech labeling decree for processed foodstuffs. The decree requires positive biotech labeling if a product contains genetically modified vegetable (plant) ingredients. In a similar move, the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) implemented in January 2004 a comparable biotech-labeling requirement on animal feed, fruit and vegetables while banning imports of GE seeds.

Following is a summary of the biotech labeling requirements implemented by the MOCI:

- A. Positive labeling: If a product contains one or more GE plant ingredient, the information should be clearly communicated to the consumer by labeling. A triangle should be drawn on the label with text that should read "Contains Genetically Modified Product (s). The Ministry will not accept a statement that says "This Product May Contain biotech Ingredients." Saudi Arabia does not permit imports of foodstuffs that contain GE animal products. According to the MOCI, local food producers must also abide by the biotech labeling requirements.
- B. Bilingual labeling: The biotech statement must be clearly written in Arabic and English languages with ink color different from that of the main product tag.
- C. Health certificate: Biotech products exported to Saudi Arabia must have been approved in the country of origin for human or animal consumption. Each shipment must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by a government agency stating that the GE ingredient used in the foodstuff is approved in the country of origin for human or animal consumption.
- D. PCR Real Time Method: MOC approved the PCR Real Time Method for GE testing and set 0.9 percent threshold. If the test results reveal more than 0.9 percent of GE ingredient, the product is either destroyed locally or re-exported to the country of origin. Products with less than 0.9 percent of GE content are exempt from further testing for six months. If still on the market after six months, these products must be tested and recertified. Presently, no GE-labeled retail food products are marketed in Saudi Arabia, but GE-labeled bulk commodities and products destined for institutional end users are imported and marketed.
- E. Biotech health certificate: The Saudi Ministry of Commerce has agreed to accept health certificates issued by state departments of agriculture for high value products instead of the previous requirement that the certificates be issued by a federal government agency such as USDA or FDA for U.S. products.

The Ministry has reiterated its refusal to consider any health certificate issued by exporting companies or other private organizations including notary public statements.

F. For U.S. grains: The MOA has accepted a one-time biotech grains certification statement from the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) submitted to the Ministry in 2003. The statement certified that the exported transgenic grains are the same as those consumed in the United States. The approved statement eliminates the need for a shipment-by-shipment positive biotech certification for corn and soybean meal exported to the Kingdom. The MOA still requires each shipment of biotech fruits and vegetables to be labeled and accompanied by a biotech health certificate. In 2004, the MOA banned imports of all types of biotech seeds.

G. In February 2005, the Saudi Government announced the establishment of a national high-level biotech committee consisting of four ministries, the Saudi Arabian Standard Organization (SASO), universities and the private sector to conduct a comprehensive policy review of current biotech labeling requirements based on two ministerial decrees. The committee distributed its first draft standard for public comment in early May 2005 and received comments in August 2005. After taking into consideration comments received from all interested parties including USDA, SASO distributed another set of draft standards listed below for public comment in early 2006.

SASO Draft No 3002 /2006 “General Requirements for Genetically Modified Processed Food and Feed”

SASO Draft No 3195 /2006 “General Requirements for Genetically Modified unprocessed Agricultural Products”

SASO Draft No 3196 /2006 “General Requirements for Risk Assessment and Traceability”

After working on the three biotech draft standards for three years, Saudi Arabia decided in February 2009 to abandon its efforts to issue national biotech standards and opted to join hands with other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council to work on promulgating GCC wide agricultural biotech standards under the auspices of the Gulf Standards Organization (GSO).

In February 2008, the GSO established an Agricultural Biotech subcommittee and converted the above three SASO biotech draft standards to GSO draft standards. The biotech subcommittee has met several times since its establishment to review the three draft standards submitted by SASO.

In November 2010, Saudi Arabia on behalf of GCC countries sent two of the three biotech draft standards (General Requirements for Genetically Modified unprocessed Agricultural Products and General Requirements for Risk Assessment and Traceability) for public comments. The deadline to submit written comments is January 7, 2011.

### **III. PACKAGING AND CONTAINER REQUIREMENTS**

In 1997, Saudi Arabia issued standard No. SSA 1149/1997 entitled Food Packages-part 1-General Requirements. Some of the main requirements are listed below:

- All packaging materials used in fabricating, forming, or treating packages shall be of food grade for contact with foods and in compliance with relevant Saudi standards.
- They shall be clean and in a condition that does not allow any contamination probabilities of the contained material.
- They shall maintain the properties of the packaged material and protect it from gaining undesirable odors, flavors and tastes.
- They shall offer protection to the product against contamination with microorganisms, insect, rodents, and dirt in the cases of products that requires it.
- They shall be impermeable to moisture in the cases of food products that require it.
- They shall offer necessary protection against environmental conditions and mechanical hazards such as impacts, vibration, static stresses, and they shall be in an intact appearance during handling.
- They shall not affect the container as a result of migration of some of their constituents that may react or be mixed with the food materials.
- It shall not be in a pharmaceutical shape.

Saudi standard No. SASO 1301/1997 deals with specifications for the general requirements of plastic packages used for packaging food materials. The three page regulations require limits among other things that the concentration of a vinyl chloride monomer not to exceed 1 mg per kg of the plastic material, or 0.01 mg per kg of the packaged food material if the packages are made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

Per the standard, the following labeling information should be written on labels of plastic packages used to package foodstuffs:

1. Type of plastic material
2. Weight, capacity, number, or dimensions based on the type of packages
3. Statement of food grade
4. Purpose and type of application
5. Directions for usage
6. Warnings if applicable

#### IV. FOOD ADDITIVE REGULATIONS

1. The Kingdom and the other five Gulf Cooperation countries have established the following major gulf-wide standards that regulate additives used in foodstuffs. Each standard contains a positive additive list.

- An eight-page Gulf Standard No. 23/1998 entitled “Coloring Matter Used in Food Stuff.” Shown below lists coloring matter permitted in foodstuffs.

Colour	EEC No.	Notes
<u>Green Dyes</u>		
Chlorophyll	140	Chlorophyllins
Chlorophyll copper complex	141	
<u>Brown Dyes</u>		
Plain caramel	150A	
Caustic sulphite caramel	150B	
Ammonia caramel	150C	
Sulphite ammonia caramel	150D	
<u>Black Dyes</u>		
Activated vegetable carbon	153	
<u>Inorganic Dyes</u>		
Titanium dioxide	171	White dye 6
Iron oxides	172	

**Table 2**  
**Permitted Synthetic Colours for Use in Foodstuffs in General**

<b>Colour</b>	<b>EEC No.</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<u>Red Colours</u>		
Azorubine	122	Carmosine, Food Red 3
Allura Red (Food Red 17)	129	FD C Red 40
<u>Yellow Colours</u>		
Sunset Yellow FCF	110	Food yellow 3, Orange Yellow S, FD and C yellow No. 6
Tartrazine	102	Food yellow 4, FD and C yellow No. 5
<u>Brown Colours</u>		
Chocolate brown HT	155	Food brown 3
<u>Green Colours</u>		
Fast green FCF	143	FD and C Green No. 3 Food green 3
<u>Blue Colours</u>		
Indigotine	132	Indigo carmine, FD and C blue No. 2, Food blue 1
Brilliant Blue FCF	133	Food blue 2, FD and C blue No. 1
<u>Black Colours</u>		
Brilliant Black PN	151	Food black 1, Black PN

**Table 3**  
**Colouring Matter Permitted for Use in Certain Foodstuffs**

EEC No.	Colour	Foodstuffs	Maximum Level
127	Erythrosine	Cherries and its products	-
128	Red 2G	Sausages Flavoured yoghurt	20 ppm
161G	Canthaxanthin	Cooked sausages Edible ices	30 ppm 100 ppm
173	Aluminium	External coating of sugar confectionery for the decoration of cakes and pastries	GMP
174	Silver	External coating of confectionery	GMP
175	Gold	External coating of confectionery	GMP
180	Lithotrubine BK	Edible cheese surface	GMP
-	Orange B	Surfaces of frankfurters and sausages	150 ppm
-	Citrus Red No. 2	Skins of Orange	2 ppm

**Table 4**  
**Characteristics for Synthetic Colours**

Property	Purity	Volatile* matter at 135°C	Water Insoluble	Ether Extract	Subsidiary Dyes
Colour	% (Min.)	% (Max.)	% (Max.)	% (Max.)	% (Max.)
Azorubine	85	15	0.2	0.2	2
Red 2 G	82	18	0.2	0.2	2
Sunset Yellow FCF	85	15	0.2	0.2	4
Tartrazine	85	15	0.2	0.2	1
Chocolate Brown Ht	80	20	-	0.2	15
Fast Green FCF	85	15	0.2	0.2	1
Indigotine	85	15	0.2	0.2	1
Brilliant Blue FCF	85	15	0.2	0.2	3
Brilliant Black PN	84	15	0.2	0.2	4
FD & C Red 40	85	14	0.2	-	-

\* Volatile matter + chlorides and sulphates.

## 5- SAMPLING

5.1 A number of containers shall be selected randomly from each lot according to Table 5.

**Table 5**  
**Number of Colouring Matter Containers Selected as Sample**

Lot size	Number of selected containers
2 - 15	2
16 - 40	3
41 - 65	4
66 - 110	7
More than 110	10



## ANNEX 1

### Permissible Daily Intake of the Colouring Matter Per Body Weight

Colour	ADI mg/kg body weight	Colour	ADI mg/kg body weight
Annatto (determine as Bixin)	0.065	Iron oxides	0-0.5
Azorubine	0-4.0		
Beta-Carotene	0-5		
Beta-Apo-8-Carotenal	0-5	Red 2G	0-0.1
Beta-Apo-8-Carotenoic acid	0-5		
Beet powder	-	Riboflavin	0-0.5
Brilliant black PN	0-1.0	Sunset yellow FCF	0-2.5
Brilliant blue FCF	0-12.5	Tartrazine	0-7.5
Canthaxanthine	0-25	Titanium Dioxide	-
Caramel	-	FD & C Red 40	0-7.0
Caramel made by ammonium sulphite process	0-100	Aluminium	-
Chlorophyll	-	Anthocyanine	15
Chlorophyll copper complex	0-15	Carrot oil	-
Chocolate brown HT	0-1.5		
Turmeric	0-2.5		
Curcumine	0-0.1		
Fast green FCF	0-12.5		
Gold	-		
Indigotine	0-5		

**Food Color Labeling:** The following information shall be declared on the labels of food coloring matter containers:

- \* The name of the coloring matter or EEC number.
- \* Name of solvent or diluent.
- \* Dye purity grade.
- \* The statement "free from alcohol".

- \* The statement "coloring matter for food".
- \* The statement "Do not exposure to light" in case of coloring matter affected by light.
- \* Dates of production and expiry.
- \* Batch number
- \* Common name or EEC number.

-Gulf Standard No. 357\1994 lists the following antioxidants permitted for use in foodstuffs.

#### **PERMITTED ANTIOXIDANT SYNERGISTS**

<b>EEC No.</b>	<b>Antioxidant Synergists</b>
270	Lactic acid
325	Sodium lactate
326	Potassium lactate
327	Calcium lactate
330	Citric acid
331	Sodium citrate
332	Potassium citrate
333	Calcium citrate
334	Tartaric acid
335	Sodium tartrates
336	Potassium tartrates
337	Sodium potassium tartrate
338	Orthophosphoric acid
339	Sodium orthophosphate
340	Potassium orthophosphate
341	Calcium orthophosphate
472	Citric acid esters of mono and di-glycerides of fatty acids (citroglycerides)
-	Phosphoric acid
385	Ethylenediamine tetra-acetic calcium disodium
-	Ethylenediamine tetra-acetic disodium

– Gulf Standard No. 356/1994 lists preservatives permitted for use in food products. See the following table for preservatives permitted in foodstuffs.

**TABLE NO. (1)**  
**“PRESERVATIVES PERMITTED FOR USE IN FOOD PRODUCTS”**

<b>Preservatives</b>	<b>EEC No.</b>	<b>Preservatives</b>	<b>EEC No.</b>
Sorbic acid	200	Diphenyl (Biphenyl)	230
Sodium sorbat	201	Orthophenyl phenol	231
Potassium sorbat	202	Sodium orthophenyl phenate	232
Calcium sorbat	203	Thiabendazole	233
Benzoic acid	210	Formic acid	236
Sodium benzoate	211	Sodium formate	237
Potassium benzoate	212	Calcium formate	238
Calcium benzoate	213	Hexamine (hexamethylene	
Ethyl P-Hydroxy benzoate	214	teteramine)	239
Ethyl P-Hydroxy benzoate sodium	215	Potassium nitrite	249
Propyl P-Hydroxy benzoate	216	Sodium nitrite	250
Propyl P-Hydroxy benzoate sodium	217	Sodium nitrate	251
Methyl P-Hydroxy benzoate	218	Potassium nitrite	252
Methyl P-Hydroxy benzoate sodium	219	Acetic acid	260
Sulphur dioxide	220	Potassium acetate	261
Sodium sulphite	221	Sodium diacetate	262
Sodium bisulphate	222	Calcium acetate	263
Sodium metabisulphite	223	Lactic acid	270
Potassium metabisulphite	224	Propionic acid	280
Calcium sulphite	226	Sodium propionate	281
Calcium bisulphate	227	Calcium propionate	282
Natamycin (pimaricin)	-	Potassium propionate	283
Nisin	-	Carbon dioxide	290
		Calcium disodium ethylene	
		diamine tetra-acetate	-
		Disodium ethylene diamine	
		tetra acetate	-
		Heptyl Paraban	-

**Preservatives Labeling:** The following information shall be declared in Arabic on food or preservatives containers:

- \* Common name or EEC number.
- \* The statement “Preservative for Use in Food Products” in case of preservatives containers.

— GSO standard number 381\1994, defines Emulsifiers, Stabilizers and Thickeners Permitted for use in Food Products as follows:

**Emulsifiers:** Substances which, when added to a foodstuff, aid the formation of a uniform dispersion of two or more immiscible substances.

**Stabilizers:** Substances which, when added to a foodstuff, aid the maintenance of a uniform dispersion of two or more immiscible substances.

**Thickeners:** Substances which, when added to a foodstuff, increase its viscosity.

GSO requires that only emulsifiers stabilizers and thickeners mentioned in Table (1) below should be used only with food

products.

**Emulsifiers, Stabilizers and Thickeners**  
**Permitted for Use in Food Products**

<b>E.E.C No.</b>	<b>Name</b>
322	Lecithins
339	Sodium orthophosphates — monosodium dihydrogen phosphates — disodium monohydrogen phosphates — trisodium phosphates
340	Potassium orthophosphates — monopotassium dihydrogen phosphates — dipotassium monohydrogen phosphates — tripotassium phosphates,
341	Calcium orthophosphates — monocalcium tetrahydrogen diphosphates — monocalcium monohydrogen phosphates — tricalcium diphosphates
400	Alginic acid
401	Sodium alginate.
402	Potassium alginate.
403	Ammonium alginate
404	Calcium alginate
405	Propane-1,2-diol alginate (Glycol propalin alginate).
406	Agar.
407	Carrageenan
410	Locust bean gum.
—	Ghatti gum
412	Guar gum
413	Tragacanth.
414	Acacia.
415	Xanthan gum.

**Table (1) Continued**

<b>E.E.C No.</b>	<b>Name</b>
416	Karaya gum.
420	Sorbitol, sorbitol syrup.
421	Mannitol.
422	Glycerol.
430	Polyoxyethylene (8) stearate.
432	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monolaurate.
433	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan mono-oleate.
434	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan mono-palmitate.
435	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan mono-stearate.
—	Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan tri stearate.
436	Polyoxyethylene (8) sorbitan tri-stearate.
—	Polyoxyethylene (40) stearate.
440 A	Pectin.
440 B	Amidated pectin.
442	Ammonium salts of phosphatic acid.
450	Sodium and potassium polyphosphates.
450 A	Diphosphates
	— disodium dihydrogen diphosphate
	— trisodium monohydrogen diphosphate
	— tetrasodium diphosphate
	— tetrapotassium diphosphate.
450 B	Triphosphates
	— pentasodium triphosphates
	— pentapotassium triphosphates.
450 C	Polyphosphates.
460	Micro crystalline cellulose.
461	Methylcellulose.
463	Hydroxypropyl cellulose.
464	Hydroxypropyl methycellulose.
465	Ethylmethylcellulose.

**Table (1)**  
**Continued:**

E.E.C No.	Name
466	Carboxymethylcellulose.
470	Sodium, potassium and calcium salts of fatty acids.
471	Mono - and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 A	Acetic acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 B	Lactic acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 C	Citric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 D	Tartaric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 E	Mono-and di-acetyltartaric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
472 F	Mixed acetic and tartaric acid esters of mono-and di-glycerides of fatty acids.
473	Sucrose esters of fatty acids.
474	Sucroglycerides.
475	Polyglycerol esters of fatty acids.
476	Polyglycerol polyricinoleate.
477	Propane-1,2-diols of esters of fatty acid.
479	Esters of glycerol and thermally oxidized soybean fatty acids.
480	Dioctyl sodium sulfosuccinate.
481	Sodium stearol -2- lactylate.
482	Calcium stearyl -2- lactylate.
483	Stearyl tartrate.
491	Sorbitan monostearate.
492	Sorbitan tristearate.
493	Sorbitan monolaurate.
494	Sorbitan monooleate.
495	Sorbitan monopalmitate
—	Amylose and amylopectin
—	Calcium acetate
—	Cholic acid
—	Desoxy cholic acid
—	Modified starch
—	Polydextroses A & N

**Table (1) Continued**

<b>E.E.C No.</b>	<b>Name</b>
—	Potassium sodium L + ) tartrate
—	Tartaric acid
—	Polyvinyl pyrrolidone
—	Sodium casinate
—	Succinylated monoglycerides
—	Sodium stearyl fumarate
—	Gelatin edible
—	Sorboyl palmitate
—	Stearyl citrate
—	Stearyl tartrate
—	Stearyl monoglyceridyl citrate.

- Gulf Standard No. 995/1998 deals with sweeteners permitted for use in food products. Refer to appendix II for the list.
- SSA 73/1978 is concerned with Benzoic Acid, Sodium Benzoate and Potassium Benzoate Used in Preservation of Foodstuffs.  
  
SSA 106/1978 lists permitted food additives in edible oils and fats.
- Gulf Standard No. 707/1997 deals with flavors permitted for use in foodstuffs. The standard lists all natural and artificial flavors as well as flavor enhancers permitted for use in food products intended for human consumption

English copies of the above and other standards are available at the GSO and SASO. Interest U.S. exporters can purchase them from SASO's information center. Please refer to appendix 1 for coordinates of the center.

SASO and GSO depend heavily on CODEX Alimentarius regulations and to some extent on European and U.S. standards when drafting most of Saudi or Gulf Standards including food additives, pesticide and other contaminants. The Kingdom sometimes bans CODEX's approved food additives if they are banned on health grounds by developed countries (mainly the United States and/or Europe) or if they contain substances banned for religious reasons.



## **V. PESTICIDE AND OTHER CONTAMINANTS**

The Kingdom and other members of the Gulf Cooperation have developed positive pesticide and other contaminants lists. Per SASO the lists have international context as they were mainly adapted from CODEX Alimentarius standards. The following are the major Gulf/Saudi standards enforced in the Kingdom:

Gulf Standard No. 382/1994 “Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural Food Products-Part 1” established the maximum limits for ten pesticide residues in foods and agricultural commodities or animal feed: Malathion, Bromophos, Diquat, Fenchlorfos, Pyrethrins, Quintozense, Parathion, Orthophenyl Phenol, Methidathion and Fentin.

Gulf Standard No. 422/1994 “Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural Food Products-Part 2” establishes the maximum limits for nine pesticide residues in agricultural and food products intended for human consumption. The residues are: dimethoate, chlorfenvinphos, crufomate, diazinon, dioxathion, diphenyl, diphenylamine, ethoxyquin and folpet.

Gulf Standard No. 357/1994 “Antioxidants Permitted for use in Foodstuffs” lists antioxidants and antioxidants synergists permitted for use in food products. Refer to appendix II for permitted antioxidants.

Gulf Standard No. 841/1997 regulates the maximum limits aflatoxins permitted in foods and animal feeds.

Gulf Standard No. 988/1998 is concerned with limits of radioactivity levels (gemma rays, cesium 134, 137) permitted in foodstuffs, drinking water and animal feeding stuffs. The limits of radioactivity levels permitted in food products shall not exceed the following limits:

- 10 becquerel/kg or liter in water
- 30 becquerel/kg or liter in milk and its products
- 30 becquerel/kg liter in liter in baby foods
- 75 becquerel/kg or liter in other food products
- 300 becquerel/kg in animal feeds

For dried products requiring reconstitution, the limits are determined after it is reconstituted with water.

English copies of the above and other standards are available at the Saudi Arabian Standard Organization. Interested U.S. exporter can purchase them from SASO’s information center. Please refer to appendix 1 for coordinates of the center.

The Ministry of Agriculture’s (MAW) registers and enforces Saudi Arabian or Gulf standards on feed additives as well as pesticides used in agricultural products. Coordinates of the Ministry are found in Appendix I.

### **I. Gulf Standard No. 382/1994 “Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural**

Food Products-Part 1”. The tables below indicate the maximum limits for Malathion, Bromophos, Diquat Fenchlorfos, Pyrethrins, Quintozene, Parathion, Orthophenyl Phenol, Methidathion and Fentin.

**Maximum Residue Limits for Malathion**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Apples	2	Unprocessed Unprocessed
– Beans, Dried	8	
– Beans, Green	2	
– Blackberries	8	
– Blueberries	0.5	
– Bran of rye	20	
– Bran of wheat	20	
– Blue berries	0.5	
– Broccoli	5	
– Cabbage	8	
– Cauliflower	0.5	
– Celery	1	
– Cereal grains	8	
– Cherries	6	
– Citrus fruits	4	
– Eggplant (aubergines)	0.5	
– Endive	8	
– Fruit, Dried	8	
– Grapes	8	
– Kale	3	
– Kohlrabi	0.5	
– Lentils	8	
– Lettuce	8	
– Nuts (whole in shell)	8	
– Peaches	6	

**Table (1) (continued)**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Pears	0.5	
– Peas (in the Pod)	0.5	
– Peppers	0.5	
– Plums	6	
– Raspberries	8	
– Root Vegetables (except Turnips)	0.5	
– Spinach	8	
– Strawberries	1	
– Swiss Chard	0.5	
– Tomatoes	3	
– Turnips	3	
– Whole Meal and Flour from Rye and Wheat	2	

**Bromophos**

Residue: Bromophos

**Table (2)****Maximum Residue limits for Bromophos**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Apples	2	
– Barley straw	0.5	
– Blackberries	1.0	
– Broadbeans (without pods)	0.1	
– Broccoli	0.1	
– Brussels sprouts	0.5	
– Cabbage	0.1	
– Cabbage, savoy	1.0	
– Carrots	2	
– Cauliflower	0.1	
– Celery	1	
– Cereal grains	10	
– Cherries	1	
– Cucumber	0.1	

**Table (2) (continued)**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Currants, red, black, white	1.0	in the carcass fat
– French bean	1	
– Gooseberries	0.5	
– Kale	0.5	
– Kohlrabi	0.1	
– Leeks	2	
– Lettuce	1	
– Lettuce lamb's	2	
– Milk	0.05*	
– Oat straw	0.5	
– Olive oil	5	
– Olive	5	
– Onions	0.5	
– Peaches	1.0	
– Pears	1.0	
– Peas	0.1	
– Plums including prunes	2	
– Radishes	2	
– Rape seed	0.2	
– Rape seed oil	0.2	
– Raspberries	1	
– Sheep, carcass meat	0.5	
– Spinach	1	
– Strawberries	0.5	
– Sugar beet (roots)	0.5	
– Sugar beet leaves	0.5	
– Tomatoes	0.5	
– Wheat bran	20	Unprocessed
– White bread	0.5	
– White flour	2	
– Whole meal bread	2	

\* Level at or about the limit of determination.

## Diquat

Residue: Diquat cation

**Table (3)**  
**Maximum Residue Limits for Diquat**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Barley	5	
– Beans	0.5	
– Cottonseed	1	
– Cottonseed, Edible oil	0.1	
– Eggs	0.05	
– Maize	0.1	
– Meat	0.05*	
– Meat products	0.05*	
– Milk (whole)	0.01	
– Onion	0.1	
– Peas	0.1	
– Potatoes	0.2	
– Rapeseed	2	
– Rapeseed, Edible oil	0.1	
– Rice in the husk	5	
– Rice (hulled and/or polished)	0.2	
– Sesame seed oil, Edible	0.1	
– Sorghum	2	
– Sugar beets	0.1	
– Sunflower seed	0.5	
– Sunflower seed, Edible oil	0.1	
– Vegetables	0.05*	
– Wheat	2	
– Wheat flour (white)	0.2	
– Whole meal wheat flour	2	
– Wheat bran	5	

\* Levels at or about the limit of determination.

## **Fenchlorfos**

Residue : Sum of fenchlorfos and its oxygen analogue

**Table (4)**

### **Maximum Residue Limits for Fenebtorfos**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Cattle Carcase Meat	10	in the Shell-free- basis Carcase fat in the Fat in the Carcase fat
– Eggs	0.05	
– Goat, Carcase Meat	10	
– Milk	0.08	
– Poultry	0.01*	
– Sheep, Carcase meat	10	

\* Level at or about the limit of determination.

## **Pyrethrins**

Residue: Sum of pyrethrins I and II and other structurally related insecticidal ingredients of pyrethrum.

**Table (5)**

### **Maximum Residue Limits for Pyrethrins**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Cereal grains	3	
– Fish, dried	3	
– Fruit	1	
– Fruit, dried	1	
– Oilseeds	1	
– Peanut (kernels)	1	
– Tree nuts	1	
– Vegetables	1	
– Vegetables, dried	1	

### **Quintozene**

Residue: Sum of quintozene, pentachloroaniline and methyl pentachlorophynyl sulphide.

**Table (6)**  
**Maximum Residue Limits for Quintozene**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Bananas	1	Whole Product
– Beans (except navy beans)	0.01	
– Broccoli	0.02	
– Cabbage	0.02	
– Cottonseed	0.03	
– Lettuce	3	
– Navy beans	0.2	
– Peanuts	2	
– Peanuts (whole product)	5	
– Peppers (bell-type)	0.01	
– Potatoes	0.2	
– Tomatoes	0.1	

### **Parathion**

Residue: Sum of parathion and its oxygen analogue.

**Table (7)**  
**Maximum Residue Limits for Parathion**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Apricots	1	Whole Product
– Citrus fruit	1	
– Other fruits	0.5	
– Peaches	1	
– Vegetables	0.7	Except carrots

Orthophenyl phenol [2-phenylphenol] and its sodium salt

Residue: 2 phenylphenol and sodium 2-phenyl -phenate, expressed as 2-phenylphenol.

**Table (8)**

**Maximum Residue Limits for Orthophenylphenol**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Apples	25	Edible portion
– Cantaloupes	10	
– Carrots	20	
– Cherries	3	
– Citrus fruit	10	
– Cucumber	10	
– Nectarines	3	
– Peaches	20	
– Pears	25	
– Peppers	10	
– Pineapples	10	
– Plums	15	
– Sweet potatoes	15	
– Tomatoes	10	



**Methidathion**

Residue: Methidathion

**Table (9)**  
**Maximum Residue Limits for Methidathion**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Apples	0.5	Shell-free basis
– Apricots	0.2	
– Beans	0.1	
– Cabbage	0.2	
– Cattle, fat	0.02*	
– Cattle, edible offal	0.02*	
– Cattle, carcass meat	0.02*	
– Cauliflower	0.2	
– Cherries	0.2	
– Citrus fruit (except mandarins)	2.0	
– Cottonseed	0.2	
– Cotton seed oil (crude)	1	
– Eggs	0.02*	
– Grapes	0.2	
– Hops (dried)	3	
– Leafy vegetables	0.2	
– Maize (Grain)	0.1	
– Mandarins	5	
– Milk	0.0008*	
– Nectarines	0.2	
– Peaches	0.2	
– Pears	0.5	
– Peas	0.1	
– Plums	0.2	
– Potatoes	0.02*	
– Poultry	0.02*	
– Poultry, Edible offal	0.02*	
– Poultry, fat	0.02*	
– Sheep, Edible offal	0.02*	
– Sheep, fat	0.02*	
– Sheep, Carcass meat	0.02*	
– Sorghum (Grain)	0.1	Dry, manufactured
– Tea	0.1	
– Tomatoes	0.1	

\* Level at or about limit of determination.

**Fentin**

Residue: Fentin excluding inorganic tin and di- and mono-phenyl tin.

**Table (10)**  
**Maximum Residue Limits for Feath**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit for Matathion (PPM)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
– Carrots	0.2	
– Celeriac	0.1	
– Celery	1	
– Cocoa beans	0.1*	
– Coffee (raw beans)	0.1*	
– Peanuts	0.05*	Shell-free basis
–	0.05*	Shell-free basis
– Potatoes	0.1	
– Rice in the husk	0.1*	
– Sugar beets	0.2	

\* Level at or about limit of determination.

II. Gulf Standard No. 422/1994 “Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues in Agricultural Food Products-Part 2” establishes the maximum limits for nine pesticide residues in agricultural and food products intended for human consumption. The residues are: dimethoate, chlorfenvinphos, crufomate, diazinon, dioxathion, diphenyl, diphenylamine, ethoxyquin and folpet.

**Table 1**  
**Maximum residue limit of dimethoate**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Apples	2.0	
Beans	2.0	
Beetroot	0.2	
Broccoli	2.0	
Cabbage	2.0	
Carrot	1.0	
Cattle	0.02	
Cauliflower	2.0	
Celery	2.0	
Cherries	2.0	
Corn grain	0.1	
Eggs	0.02	

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Carrot	0.4	(Kernels) Fat basis  Shell - free basis
Citrus fruit	1.00	
Cauliflower	0.1	
Cottonseed	0.05	
Eggplant	0.05	
Horseradish	0.1	
Leeks	0.05	
Maize	0.05	
Milk	0.008	
Mushroom	0.05	
Onion	0.05	
Peanuts	0.05	
Potato	0.05	
Radish	0.1	
Rice	0.05	
Sweet Potato	0.05	
Tomato	0.1	
Turnip	0.05	
Wheat	0.05	

### **Crufomate**

Residue: Crufomate

**Table 3**  
**Maximum residue limit of crufomate**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Meat	1.0	Fat basis
Milk	0.05	

**Table 4**  
**Maximum residue limit of diazinon**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Almonds	0.1	Shell - free basis
Barley	0.1	
Cattle, carcass meat	0.7	On the carcass fat basis
Citrus fruit	0.7	
Cotton seed	0.1	
Filberts	0.1	Shell - free basis
Fruit	0.5	
(except cherries, grape, melon, carrot, cucumber)	0.75	
Leafy vegetables	0.70	
Milk	0.02	
Olive oil	2.0	
Olive (unprocessed)	2.0	
Peaches	0.7	
Peanuts	0.1	Shell - free basis
Pecans	0.1	Shell - free basis
Rice (polished)	0.1	
Safflower seed	0.1	
Sheep, carcass meat	0.7	On the carcass fat basis
Sunflower seed	0.1	
Sweet corn	0.7	
Vegetables (except leafy vegetables)	0.5	
Walnuts	0.1	Shell - free basis
Wheat	0.1	

**Dioxathion**

Residue: Sum of cis and trans - dioxathion

**Table 5**  
**Maximum residue Limit of dioxathion**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Apple	5	
Apricots	0.1	
Cattle, carcass meat	1	On the carcass fat basis

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Cherries	0.1	On the carcass fat basis
Citrus fruit	3	
Goats, carcass meat	1	
Grapes	2	
Milk	0.008	
Peaches	0.1	
Pears	5	
Plums	0.1	
Quinces	5	
Sheep, carcass meat	1	On the carcass fat basis

Diphenyl

Residue: Diphenylamine

**Table 6**

**Maximum residue limit of diphenyl**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Citrus fruit	110	

**Diphenylamine**

Residue: Diphenylamine

**Table 7**

**Maximum residue limit of diphenylamine**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Apple	10	

**Ethoxyquin**

Residue: Ethoxyquin

**Table 8****Maximum residue limit of Ethoxyquin**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Apple	3	
Pears	3	

**Folpet**

Residue: Folpet

**Table 9****Maximum residue limit of Folpet**

<b>Food Product</b>	<b>Maximum Residue Limit (ppm)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Apple	25	
Blue berries	25	
Cherries	15	
Citrus fruit	10	
Carrots (fresh)	30	
Cucumber	2	
Grapes	25	
Lettuce	15	
Onion	2	
Raspberries	15	
Strawberries	20	
Tomato	5	
Watermelon	2	

## **VI. OTHER REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Product Registration**

Herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods must be registered with the General Directorate of Medical and Pharmaceutical Licenses of the Saudi Ministry of Health in order to be marketed in the Kingdom. The registration is done through a local agent by submitting sample products and product brochures, which are studied and tested by the ministry's central laboratory. It takes about six months for the ministry to approve and license a product. The ministry charges about \$300 as a registration fee.

A U.S. exporter needs to submit the following documents through its local agent to the Ministry in order to initiate the product registration and licensing process:

1. Table of contents
2. An Authenticated copy of the agency registration certificate at the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
3. When registering for herbal products, a copy of pharmaceutical wholesale license should be submitted by the local agent.
4. Certificate (s) issued by the health authorities in the country of origin clearly stating that the following should be provided:
  - The company is licensed to manufacture the products in the country of origin (state license number and date).
  - The company is permitted to sell the product in the country of origin (certificate of free sale)
  - The company follows good manufacturing practice.
  - Coloring agents, diluents and other incorporate substances in the product formula are permitted in the country of origin (if the free sale certificate states such information it will be sufficient).
  - Package insert and applicable information stated on the pack are the same as that approved and currently marketed in the country of origin. Package insert shall be in Arabic and English languages. The company is obliged to add and/or delete any information required for handling the product in the Kingdom as determined by the registration committee.
5. A certificate issued by the company and authenticated by the relevant authorities in the country of origin clearly stating the following information about the product:
  - Registration number and date and date of marketing in the country of origin.
  - Trade and/or generic name.

Full composition (the scientific name of active and inactive ingredients and their quantities)

- Therapeutic category (if any).
- The composition of product to be exported to the kingdom is the same as that market in the country of origin.
- Names of countries where the product is currently marketed.
- A certificate of analysis indicating the results of completed analyses for the submitted samples.
- If the product contains ingredients of animal source the kind of animal must be specified.
- Percentage of alcohol in the finished product, if present, should be indicated with justification of that percentage.

6. Full specifications and methods of analyses of the finished product, as well as stability study and data including storage conditions.

7. Six samples of the product as well as samples of the outer package and product's label.

8. Abstracts of scientific references brochures and international scientific periodicals testifying to the efficacy and safety of the product.

## **B. Products Inspection**

With the exception of herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods (inspected by the Ministry of Health) and live animals, plants, seeds and animal feed (inspected by the Ministry of Agriculture), all imported foodstuffs are inspected by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry inspectors at the port of entry. If a consignment is rejected for not adhering to pertinent Saudi Standards or gulf standards, the importer is requested to re-export or destroy the product.

## **C. Imports of Samples**

Samples destined to potential Saudi buyers or for display in Food Shows are exempt from Saudi labeling and shelf life regulations, but are subject to inspection at ports of entry. A commercial invoice specifying that the product is not for sale and has no commercial value must accompany samples, which are usually sent to Saudi Arabia by D.H.L. and similar carriers.

## **D. Foodstuff Monitoring**

The Environmental Protection Department at the Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs is responsible for establishing nationwide food sanitation laws and guidelines. Inspectors at the municipality levels do monitoring of products already in the market. The authorities inspect retailers,



wholesalers, restaurants, bakeries, fast food chains, vegetable and meat markets for expiration dates, sanitary and storage conditions as well as product handling. Outlets found selling unhygienic or expired products are exposed to stiff financial fines, temporary closure or both.

## **F. Certification and Documents Requirements**

All food products, whether imported for commercial purpose, or for display, or for sampling, must be fit for human consumption and should be within the shelf life set. The products must have a label or sticker showing the statutory information such as product name, country of origin, producer's name and address, production and expiry dates, etc. Bilingual labeling (Arabic/English) is required if the products are commercially imported. English labeling is sufficient for foodstuffs imported for display or sampling purposes.

For commercial importation, the following documents are required:

1. Commercial invoice showing FOB price, freight and CFR value
2. Certificate of origin
3. Halal slaughter certificate for meat and meat products. Halal certificate is also required for cheese and cheese products if they contain rennet of animal origin.
4. Health certificate from the country of origin
5. Phytosanitary certificate for grain, grain products, edible nuts, fruits, vegetables, etc,
6. Bill of lading or airway bill.
7. Packing list (highly recommended to expedite product inspection and clearing process)
8. Weight list (for grain)

Saudi Customs accepts the original commercial invoice and country of origin certificate attested by a local chamber of commerce and industry located in a city or area where the foodstuffs are purchased and shipped. Certificates number three to five listed above must be attested by any of the Saudi missions located in the States. Before taking the certificates to a Saudi mission, U.S. exporters must make sure that the certificates were first authenticated by any U.S./Arab Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Saudi Arabian Business Council, or U.S. Chamber of Commerce located in the city or area where the exporting firm is based.

For small samples, simple documentation as follows is required:

- Invoice, showing consignee's name and address, details of product/s and also origin of goods.
- Packing list, if there are many items.

The above documents do not require legalization by the Saudi mission. An exporting company stamp and signature are sufficient. It is advisable to show on the invoice a nominal value of \$5 -\$10 for Customs purpose, with a statement that the goods are "Not For Sale – No Commercial Value"

For clearance of sea or airfreight cargo, a full set of documentation is required while for cargo sent by courier which do not require special certifications such as Halal, an invoice and country of origin certificate will be sufficient, provided the value is not more than \$3,000.

## **VII. OTHER SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Certificate of Islamic Slaughter**

Per Saudi Arabia Standard No. SSA 630/1990 (Animal Slaughtering Requirements According to Islamic Law), a Certificate of Islamic Slaughter must be issued for all meat and poultry products entering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This certificate issued by Islamic institutions recognized by the Saudi Embassy or Consulates in the United States. Information related to the approved Islamic institutions may be obtained from the Saudi Embassy in Washington or the nearest Saudi Consulate (New York, Houston, or Los Angeles). Such certificates contain language certifying Islamic slaughter. The following language was taken from a recently issued Islamic Slaughtering certificate issued in the United States:

“ This is to certify that an Islamic representative inspected the above slaughter facility. The healthy animals and/or poultry were inspected within 12 hours previous to slaughter by the United States Department of Agriculture official veterinarian. After processing, inspection was made and approved by the USDA Government Health inspector. Further, the animals and /or poultry were slaughtered under the following statement, “slaughtered and processed in the name of God, the Almighty, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, God is Greatest.” Bismillahi Rahmani Rahim-Allahu Akbar. The animals and /or poultry covered by this certificate were slaughtered by means of a sharp knife, cutting through the skin, jugular vein, and trachea, to result in thorough bleeding of the carcass in preparation for dressing and evisceration.

### **B. Baby Foods**

There are two Saudi Arabian standards that establish quality specification for baby foods. Canned Baby Foods and infant foods based on milk are regulated by SSA 676/1992 and SSA 675/1994 respectively. Copies of the standards can be purchased from the SASO's Information Center.

### **C. Frozen Chickens**

SSA 117/1979 deals with frozen chickens standard. Per the regulation, imported frozen chickens must meet the Islamic slaughtering requirements mentioned above. The standard also calls for salmonella testing for imported frozen chickens. If the result of the test is positive in more than one sample out of five samples tested, the whole shipment is rejected.

### **D. Animal Feed Requirements**

In 2001, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce issued a new requirement for poultry meat, beef and further processed meat and poultry products imports to the Kingdom. This directive requires that health certificates for imported poultry, and beef products clearly indicate that the animal slaughtered was not fed animal protein, animal fats, or animal by-products before it is allowed entry into the Kingdom. In January 2006, the Kingdom implemented a two-certificate approach for U.S. poultry and bovine meat products exports. The two-stage approach consists of: (1) an official FSIS export certificate and (2) a producer or manufacturer self-certification to cover any additional requirements not related to food safety or animal health. These requirements have sharply reduced imports of U.S. livestock and poultry meat and products to the Kingdom.

### **E. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)**

On February 9, 2003, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued the Ministerial decree number **2436** to all Chambers of Commerce in the country requiring the insertion of a new clause in health certificates accompanying imported meat and meat products to make sure that the abattoirs used to produce meat & meat products exported to the Kingdom implement the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as a system of production process control.

Following is the summary of unofficial translation of a copy of the new decree number 2436:

Reference is made to the Ministerial decree #123 of April 10, 2001 which spelled out the rules and regulations to be followed when importing all types of meat: chilled, frozen or canned beef, veal, mutton, goat meat and poultry meat and their by products from safe origins to the Saudi Arabian.

Based on the need to protect consumer safety and health, it is required to implement the HACCP regime in all abattoirs producing meat and meat products. To facilitate this, a further Ministerial decree number 2436 was issued on February 8, 2003. The decision requires the insertion of a new clause, referred to as number 13, to the general regulations and condition to be followed when meat and meat products are imported to Saudi Arabia. The text of the clause # 13 should read as follows:

“The abattoir (s) implements HACCP procedures in all stages of meat and meat”

### **F. Animal Quarantine Regulations**

Over the years, Saudi Arabia has banned cattle, meat and meat products imports for health reasons. Cattle imports from countries affected by Mad Cow" disease, or Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), Foot and Mouth, and Cattle Plaque diseases have been banned for several years. Cattle imports from countries not affected by the diseases are subjected to strict quarantine regulations on arrival at Saudi ports. The country also bans meat and meat derivatives from countries affected by BSE (the Kingdom banned live cattle and cattle meat imports from Washington State, Alabama and Texas due to confirmed cases of BSE in those states). Saudi Arabia also banned transshipped livestock meat through countries banned from exporting meat and meat products because of infestation by BSE, FMD and other animal diseases. In addition it requested additional statements on the health certificate accompanying livestock and poultry meat shipment to indicate that the animals slaughtered for export to the Kingdom were not fed animal ruminants and were not treated with growth hormones.

Imports of live poultry, poultry meat (mostly from developing countries) and hatching eggs are banned from countries affected by bird flu. Imports of live poultry are also banned from countries with the West Nile Virus epidemic.

## **VIII. COPYRIGHT AND/OR TRADEMARK LAWS**

Royal Decree No. M/5 and Resolution of Council of Ministers No. 75 dated 1984 regulate trademark registration laws in the Kingdom. According to the decree, trademarks are registered with the Trademark Registration Department of the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry through a local agent or lawyer.

Once registration application is received, the Trademark Registration Department will require one month time to study the presented documents to decided on the request. If an application is approved, the department will publish the trademark in the official government Arabic language newspaper (Hum Al-Qura) with the cost of publication paid by the agent or owner of the trademark. The total registration cost is estimated at about \$2,000. Registered trademarks are protected for 10 years and can be renewed for another similar period or periods without any new inspection after republishing it in the official paper.

## **IX. IMPORT PROCEDURES**

The majority of Saudi food imports enter the country via Jeddah port on the Red Sea or Dammam port on the Arabian Gulf. About 70 percent of all foodstuffs enter Jeddah port. Imports from Jordan, Syria, and nearby countries enter the Kingdom by truck.

King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh and King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah also receive significant quantities of food items, particularly fresh fruits, vegetables and chilled meat. Fresh and chilled products are usually cleared within 24 hours of arrival.

## **Customs Clearance**

As stated earlier, foodstuff shipments must be accompanied by commercial invoice, health certificates and other documents listed in Section VI (Certification and Documents Requirements). An importer translates the commercial invoice into Arabic language (per Saudi customs requirements) and hands it to his customs clearing agent along with the other required documents in order to start customs clearing process. Containers can be cleared in less than ten days provided all required documents are in order and imported products meet Saudi Arabian/Gulf specifications. If products are rejected by one of the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry laboratories at a port of entry, an importer can appeal for re-test to the Director General of the Quality Control and Inspections Department of the Ministry. If an appeal is accepted, the Director General orders a sample (s) sent and re-tested by another Ministry's laboratory located in a different port (city). If the second test authenticates the initial results, the exporter is ordered to re-export or destroy the product.

## **APPENDIX I. GOVERNMENT REGULATORY AGENCY CONTACTS**

Currently, the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO) sets food product standards while the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) tests imported food products at various ports of entry. Contact information for SASO, SFDA, and other ministries involved in food and agricultural products safety and inspection is as follows.

Mr. Nabil Molla  
Director General of SASO  
Tel. 966-1-452-0000  
Fax: 966-1-452-0086  
Website: [www.saso.org.sa](http://www.saso.org.sa)

Ibrahim S. Al-Mohizea  
Vice President Food Affairs  
Saudi Food & Drug Authority  
Tel: 966-1-275-9222 ext. 202  
Fax: 966-1-275-1788  
[www.sfda.gov.sa](http://www.sfda.gov.sa)

Mr. Mohammed Al-Issa  
Director General  
Environmental Protection  
Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs (tests food products at points of sale make sure product meet safety standards)  
Tel: 966-1-442-1593  
Fax: 966-1-441-6748

Dr. Mohammed Al-Jasir  
Director General  
General Directorate of Nutrition Department  
Ministry of Health (registers herbal preparations, health and supplementary foods)  
Tel: 966-1-464-0811  
Fax: 966-1-464-5536

Website: [www.moh.gov.sa](http://www.moh.gov.sa)

Live animals & plants and animal feed are inspected by the Saudi Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). Following are coordinates of some the important departments.

Dr. Abdul Ghaniy Al-Fadhl  
Director General  
Plant and Animal Quarantine Department  
MOA  
Tel: 966-1-404-4292  
Fax: 966-1-401-1323

Mr. Khalid Al-Ahmed  
Director General  
Livestock Department (registers and tests feed additives)  
MOA  
Tel: 966-1-404-4555  
Fax: 966-1-404-4265

Mr. Mohammed Al-Mazroa  
Director General (registers and testes seeds as well as pesticides used in foodstuff)  
Agricultural Research Department  
MOA  
Tel: 966-1-405-5848  
Fax: 966-1-405-5848

## **APPENDIX II. OTHER IMPORT SPECIALIST CONTACTS**

Saudi Arabia does not have any relevant import specialists that are not affiliated with the government.